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SIPDIS

LONDON FOR AF WATCHER PETER LORD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/24/2019

TAGS: PREL AU MI

SUBJECT: MALAWI: AMBASSADOR BRIEFS FOREIGN MINISTER ON
DONOR GROUP MEETING REQUESTED WITH PRESIDENT

REF: A. LILONGWE 696

1B. LILONGWE 650

Classified By: Ambassador Peter W. Bodde, for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) The Ambassador joined his German and UK counterparts to represent the Donor Group countries in a December 23 call on GOM Minister of Foreign Affairs Etta Banda to set the stage for a meeting with President Mutharika requested by the group. The Donor Group is a collaborative mechanism to coordinate assistance activities with the Government of Malawi in order to ensure effectiveness and avoid duplication. In its last meeting, Chiefs of Mission of the Donor Group countries agreed to send a delegation to meet President Mutharika to discuss current trends in Malawi. They have requested the meeting for mid-January. The delegation calling on the President will include the U.S., German, Irish, Norwegian, and UK Chiefs of Mission.

12. (C) The Ambassador and his German and UK counterparts emphasized to the Foreign Minister that, "we come as friends, but concerned friends," given Malawi's economic situation and certain recent political developments (reflets). Each noted that they enjoy a positive but frank working relationship with the GOM and felt collectively the need to meet with the President to hear his views and plans.

13. (C) The COMs noted the urgency, given Malawi's likely election as AU chair in late January 2010. The group also indicated to the Foreign Minister that while the GOM has hinted at requesting donor assistance to facilitate Malawi's AU chairmanship, no request has yet been received.

BODDE